

credited his survival to the selflessness of Chaplain Goode.

When these four brave men had done everything humanly possible to help those on board, and when the end was imminent, Lieutenants Poling and Fox, both Protestants, and Washington, a Roman Catholic, and Goode, who was Jewish, joined hands and prayed together as the ship went down.

Because of their bravery, these four heroic men were posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Service Cross. Additionally, in 1960, this body awarded Fox, Poling, Washington, and Goode the Congressional Medal for Heroism. This medal was specifically created to honor these men, and they are the only four to have received it.

The SS *Dorchester* was built at Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co., and was originally a passenger liner when delivered in 1926. With the commencement of the United States involvement in World War II, the owners chartered it to the Army Transport Service to transport personnel and cargo. In Newport News today, the memory of the four chaplains is kept alive by the efforts of the Four Chaplains Memorial Committee, and with the marble and bronze monument that was erected in their memory in 1989 at the War Memorial Museum grounds. Let us keep alive their bravery their actions embodied, by remembering their heroism today.

#### RENEW AMERICA WINNERS OF THE NATIONAL AWARDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

#### HON. BILL RICHARDSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 31, 1995*

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today, three organizations from my home State of New Mexico will be recognized for their accomplishments in effective, responsible environmental projects. Lighthawk of Santa Fe, the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice of Albuquerque and the Global Rivers Environmental Education Network of Las Cruces will all be recognized by Renew America as winners of the National Award for Environmental Sustainability.

I am especially proud of the fact that New Mexico, which has one of the smallest populations of any State in the Nation, is home to three Renew America award winners. That figure is more than any other State in the Nation, with the exception of California with seven winners, and a far larger population base than New Mexico.

Lighthawk, which is known as the Environmental Air Force, is based in Santa Fe, NM, in my district, but their impact has been felt throughout the Nation and the world. Since its creation in 1979, Lighthawk and its group of pilots have flown more than 2 million miles to far-flung locations throughout the Western Hemisphere to educate the public, empower local environmental groups, and respond to environmental crises. Lighthawk flies activists, legislators, and the media over and into endangered lands, allowing individuals to learn first-hand of environmental problems and situations. I have flown with Lighthawk in the past, and I am especially pleased that they have received such significant recognition.

Project Del Rio, in cooperation with the University of Michigan's Global Rivers Environmental Education Network conducts a program that brings students and educators together from over 100 schools located along the Rio Grande both in the United States and Mexico. Using equipment, background, motivation, and resources provided by Project Del Rio, students learn to interpret scientific information, public opinion statistics, and economic data. Since its founding in 1990, many of the programs' participants have gone on to use the experience they gained while with Project Del Rio to win internships in other, similar fields.

The Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, based in Albuquerque, NM, works to address issues that impact people of color and to strengthen community organizations and encourage them to influence local, State, regional, and national policies regarding the environment. The network has been considered essential in restoring long overdue justice in the areas of unsafe working conditions, natural resource exploitation, and political disempowerment. In addition to this award the Southwest Network has been involved in many successful media campaigns, which have opened up communication channels between environmental activists, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Lastly Mr. Chairman, the Southwest Network has been instrumental in promoting the examination at the Federal level of the broad range of environmental justice issues.

Mr. Speaker, these New Mexico-based organizations truly are wonderful examples of the dedication of citizens across the country to environmental protection and education activities. I would like to salute my constituents' organizations and the other Renew America Winners for their accomplishments and contributions. They deserve our thanks and our appreciation.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMON SENSE WELFARE ACT OF 1995

#### HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 31, 1995*

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleague Mr. KOLBE, to introduce the Common Sense Welfare Reform Act of 1995. We believe this legislation could revolutionize the way we deliver social services to the Nation's poor.

Over the course of the last 60 years, government, whether it be Federal, State, or local, has assumed almost complete responsibility over caring for the Nation's poor. Like it or not, our welfare delivery system has essentially become a government monopoly. And it exhibits all of the worst symptoms: It is woefully expensive; it is overly bureaucratic; it is preoccupied with process; and it is client-ignorant. Every year, it gobbles more of our tax dollars without any incentive to cut costs or streamline itself.

The American welfare monopoly has also undercut the efforts of private organizations. It has made it nearly impossible for charities to place conditions on their aid, when prospective recipients can walk down to the local wel-

fare office and pick up a government check, no strings attached.

It has almost singlehandedly created what the Wall Street Journal's John Fund calls the I-gave-at-the-office syndrome. In fact, the portion of charitable giving in this country devoted to alleviating poverty has declined by a shocking one-third since 1960.

So the question remains: How should we reform the welfare delivery system? Our bill, like many others, would consolidate dozens of overlapping, inefficient Federal programs and put that money into a State block grant. However, it also provides for a choice-in-welfare tax credit that would give individual citizens a voice in how this country fights poverty. Under our plan, every taxpaying American would be free to direct up to 10 percent of their Federal income taxes to a charitable organization in their community that is engaged in antipoverty efforts. Each time a taxpayer claimed this credit, the Federal Government would make a corresponding reduction in their State's block grant—thereby making it revenue neutral.

The Federal Government already has a regulatory framework for overseeing nonprofit organizations, minimizing the need for additional bureaucracy. However, State governments often have a more active oversight program, so we would require that participating charities obtain State tax-exempt status as well.

In addition, to ensure that tax credit contributions are reaching the people they're intended to serve, it would be necessary to establish guidelines for participating charitable organizations. For instance, charities would be prohibited from using the proceeds to engage in lobbying or litigation activities. We would also require that at least 70 percent of a participating charity's expenses be allocated directly to the poor. And charities would be required to expand tax credit-generated contributions within 1 year of receipt.

To maintain the separation of church and state, religious organizations must have a subsidiary devoted to social welfare to be eligible. Organizations that have a religious component, but are primarily focused on social welfare—i.e., Salvation Army—would be eligible as well.

Finally, to guard against possible fraud, taxpayers themselves would not be allowed to donate tax credit-funded contributions to charities in which they have a financial interest.

Our funding mechanism is a revolving account within the Treasury Department that would hold the vast majority of the money the Federal Government intends to spend on poverty in the next fiscal year. Once Congress appropriated the money for this account, a small portion would be set aside to cover the cost of the tax credit, and the rest would be given to the States in block grant form. After April 15, any funds left in the tax credit set-aside would be given to States as a bonus.

It is important to note that the tax credit/block grant funding mechanism will be separated at the State level. For instance, Michigan's total Federal grant would be determined by how many of its citizens gave to instate, qualified charitable organizations. This is to ensure that the effects of competition are always tangible.

There are a few other provisions worth noting.

First, we phase in the tax credit over a 5-year period to ensure that the transition to a public/private partnership is a gradual one.